

A
DIALOGUE
 BETWEEN
FRANCISCO and **AURELIA**,
 Two Unfortunate ORPHANS of the
City of London



Guild-Hall, November 3. 1690.

Francisco.

A Good Morning to you, Madam, — You're an early Riser, I see; though I as little suspected to meet you here, as to find a Quaker behind the Scenes in the Play-House.

Aurelia. Why, Sir, think you that Young Women have no Business in *Guild-Hall*?

Franc. Yes, Madam, but hardly so early in a Morning. Had it been the Fourteenth of *February*, I should have suspected you came hither to Select one of the Aldermen for your *Valentine*.

Aurel. You're pleas'd to be merry, Sir — What Merits have I to deserve an Alderman?

Franc. You cloud your own Worth by your singular Modesty; 'tis well known, that some who have worn the Purple have taken their Cook Maids into the Bed with them; and, I hope, Madam, their Deserts ought not to be named with yours.

Aurel. You seem to be better Acquainted with me, than I am with my self; but, Sir, I hope you have not so ill an Opinion of our Sex in
 A General,

General, or of me in Particular, to think, that in Affairs of that Nature, Women are used to make the first Advances.

Franc. Yes. In a little foolish Gallantry like this, a Lady may go a great way, before she treads upon the heels of Modesty.

Aurel. Yes, and that little foolish Gallantry, as you are pleased to name it, shall be called fondness on our Part; for it is the admirable Temper of most of your Sex, if you observe any thing in a Woman's Conversation, which you can interpret to your Advantage, the nearer you find her Approaches, the farther you fly from her, and tell it in Company over a Bottle——*The truth en't is, Jack, I could Love Mistress's such a one, but she's so coming, that——*

Franc. No more, no more, good Madam.

Aurel. Yes, one word more, and then as silent as you please. Modesty on our part serves to whet and heighten your Desires; for 'tis a Virtue of such Reputation, that where you cannot find the Original, you Doat upon the Copy. Witness the Truth of what I say in the Conduct of the Lewdest Women of the Town, whose counterfeit Vertue allures you to an Intrigue; whereas an open Declaration of their Infamous Way of Living, would frighten you from an Amour.

Franc. But in this Discourse, of Modesty and Intrigue, we have lost our Alderman.

Aurel. What have I done, that I should be haunted with Aldermen? You are not so ill a Philosopher, as not to know, that Content or Happiness are not always the Attendants on a Plentiful Fortune; which I am neither so vain to wish, nor have Merits to deserve, however some of my Sex may be pleased with the Title of an Alderman's Lady.

Franc. Now, by this Aversion of your's to an Alderman, I humbly conceive, Madam, you are one of the Orphans of the City of London.

Aurel. You are much in the right, Sir; and, if I mistake not, by meeting you here so often, I suppose you are one of the same Unhappy Number.

Franc. 'Tis certainly so, Madam; for, like the Widow *Blackacre* in the *Plain Dealer*, I am forced to Solicit my own Cause.

Aurel. I come hither upon the same melancholy Account, but have as much Luck in the Attempt, as a Poor Fellow that Sues for an Estate in *Formâ Pauperis*.

Franc. Well! there is certainly a Pleasure in Rehearsing ones Misfortunes,

Misfortunes, especially if the Person to whom they are told, can oblige one with a like Relation. Please you therefore, Madam, to Repose your self upon this Seat, and allow one that is not a perfect Stranger to you, a quarter of an Hours Conversation, since we are fallen upon a Subject that equally concerns us both.

Aurel. The Pleasure of that Conversation will be wholly on my part, Sir.

Franc. Good Madam, let us not talk, as if we were in a Dancing School, but lay all Complements aside as superfluous, as fine Clothes at a Funeral.

Aurel. The Subject, I confess, is almost as Melancholy; for were our Bodies in as desperate a Condition as our Fortunes, I fear *Jesuists Powder* would do us but little good.

Franc. The truth on't is, we have lived upon hope a long time — A fine, thin, cooling Diet, and as necessary in our Circumstances, as Water-Gruel to a Man troubled with an over heated Liver.

Aurel. I think we may not improperly call this Place, *The Land of Promise*, where we are treated with all the Civility possible. Indeed, Madam, I think of your Petition. Truly, Sir, you will not fail next Court Day. I profess, Madam, I don't neglect your Business. And all this is nothing but Ceremony and Complement, acted with so much Gravity, that on a Court-Day I have fanned my self to have seen Mr. *Bays* his Grand Dance in the Rehearsal.

Franc. Indeed, our daily Attendance is somewhat like the Story of the Fellow, that made Love to an Invisible Mistress.

Aurel. But 'pray', Sir, give me leave to enquire of you the Reasons, or Occasions, of the Practice of putting the Orphans Money into the Chamber of *London*; by what Authority demanded, and whether our Deceased Parents were not influenced by Custom, and had a wrong Notion of the Matter; for could they have foreseen what has since happened, they would as soon have ordered their Executors to have laid out their Money in Ruffs and Farthingals, as to have put it into that bottomless Pit, the Chamber.

Franc. A Place somewhat resembling *Michael Angelo's* Picture of Hell, from whence the *Pope* himself could not redeem a *Cardinal*, there painted. But not to run too far from your Question; the Reasons of the Practice were at first intentionally Good and Pious; for —

Aurel. So were Religious Houses in the Times of the Primitive Persecutions, but Posterity improved the Matter into Monasteries

and Nunneries, though since Nurseries of Luxury and Idleness.

Franc. Your Digression is pithy enough, Madam, but 'pray' give me leave to proceed : As to the Authority by which it is demanded, 'tis well known, that the City of *London* being, by Vertue of *Magna Charta*, a Body Corporate, they have a Power or Commission to enact petty Laws and Customs among themselves, as they shall see most fit, for the better Government of the City, —

Aurel. Yes, Sir, such as ordering the Assize of Bread, or Penny Loves, for the use of School Boys, and Journeymen Taylors.

Franc. Still you will be Facetious. But to proceed. Amongst other Customs this was Enacted by Common-Council, no doubt, that every Freeman dying, and leaving a Widow and Children behind him, for the better Security of what he left them (least having their Fortunes in their own Power, they might embezzle it, or else be betrayed to very unequal, if not scandalous Matches.) The Money, I say, was paid into the *Chamberlain's Office*, the Summ Registred, and his Note given for Security ; the Lord Mayor, for the Time being, and the Court of Aldermen becoming Guardians or Trustees to the said Widow and Orphans, either of which were not to Marry without their Consent first had and obtained.

Aurel. With Submission to their Authority, I shall never trouble 'em with the Question.

Franc. Heaven be praised, at present the Condition of that Obligation is void ; I *Thomas* may take thee *Abigail* without that Licence ; nay, invite the Aldermen to Dinner, and they never be offended at it.

Aurel. But granting the Intention was Good and Pious, did it ever Answer the end propos'd ?

Franc. Yes, unquestionably, for several scores of Years ; for I love to do Justice to the Memory of the Dead.

Aurel. I wish my Thoughts would allow me that Liberty to the Living. But how comes it to pass, Sir, that the Bank is not in that Reputation as formerly, the City being much more Rich and Populous.

Franc. Now, Madam, you ask a very knotty Question ; but to the best of my Memory, the *Exchequer*, being shut up sometime before the Bank you speak of, languished in esteem about the Year 1681. yet, with Submission, I believe we may go higher, even as far as the Year 1641. *London* being esteemed by some at *Westminster*, what was said of *England* formerly at *Rome*, that it was *Pecunia inexhaustum*,

inexhaustus, *A Well never to be drawn dry*: Something went to the maintaining that Unnatural War, besides Bodkins and Thimbles. The prosecuting of the then miscalled *Godly Cause*, calling for vast Sums from the Chamber, which all the since received Money could not repay again; they being oftentimes forced to pay one Man's Interest with another's Principal. And though the Fatal Consequences were not known till of late, yet some Observators about *Guild-Hall* discovered, that a Late Chamberlain, famous for his Skill in Military Discipline, finding a Cloud gathering at Court, and that he was like to fall under the Displeasure of a Great Man at *Whitehall*, gave private Notice to some of his own Party to draw out their Money; and those who wanted that kind Intelligence are the chief, if not the only Sufferers now; for, you know, 'tis like the Practice of Bankers, who being blemish'd in their Repute, their Creditors coming so thick upon them to call in their Money, they are forced to stop their Payments, in order to a Composition.

Aurel. But, Sir, I have been told, that those who come a little nearer to our Memories tell us, they have observed a Tall Building upon *Fish-street Hill*, a Ditch not far from *Ludgate*, and several Conduits, to be Built with Mortar temper'd with a Sort of Brackish Water, known to the *Virtuosi*, by the Name of Widows and Orphans Tears.

Franc. No, Madam, that was not so, your Judgment has been misinformed, those Publick Structures being wholly Built at the City Charge, by Money rais'd upon a Tax upon Coals, &c.

Aurel. I could have wish'd the Wisdom of the City would have converted those Fonds into other Uses. For the Payment of the Orphans would have Eterniz'd their Memories more, than if they had erected Monuments and Mum-glasses in every Street of the City.

Franc. For my part, though I would have the Second Day of *September* never to be forgotten, yet I have wondred what that Monument was intended for, except by Day for a Landmark for Travellers, that lost their Way upon *Shooters-Hill*; and 'tis pity that some Invention is not found out to make a Lanthorn of that Flaming Ball at top, for Poor People cannot go to the Price of *Hemming's* his New-Lights; and Coals, they say, will be very dear this Winter.

Aurel. I.

Aurel. I heard, Sir, that a Gentleman t'other Day asking his Friend, What that freight bodied thing might cost building, was told, about 18000 Pounds. Did it so, says the other; I know a Gentleman of my Acquaintance has lent the City just such a Summ, I think they had best make a Mortgage of it to him for Security.

Franc. And very good Security too. Well, let the Monument stand till a Country Fellow wants Two Pence to see it, I care not; and what a pretty Accompt that Ditch you speak of comes to, after so many Thousand Pounds Expended in the Building it, when the Vaults and Cellarage belonging to it, are now offered to be Rented for One hundred Pound *per annum*. A very pretty Interest for so large a Principal. Nay, I am told, that a certain Conduit near *Foster-lane*, has already gotten a Rheumatism, for want of a Night Cap. There have been some fine Treats at *Guild-Hall*, and supposing there wanted a little Summ to buy Shrimps and Oysters for a Dish of Fish, I hope 'twas no such great Crime for the Caterer to put his Hand into the Orphans Bag to purchase 'em.

Aurel. But methinks it would have been Civil, to have invited us to eat part of the Fish, when our Money paid for the Sauce.

Franc. No, no, there is meaner Provisions suitable to our Condition. Lord! Madam, I smile to think how we Laugh till our Heartsache, and divert our selves with our very Misfortunes; as Prosperity never Exalted our Thoughts, neither does Adversity Depress them. 'Tis a Practice of Philosophy which few attain to, and the little proficiency I have made in it, is wholly owing to your generous and sprightly Conversation.

Aurel. Sir, I'd return your Complement, but at present I am out of Stock — For my part, I know no Divine nor Humane Law forbids innocent Railery; if the worst come to the worst, 'tis but reasonable Losers should have leave to speak, though it is dear jesting at the Rate of Eight Thousand Pound. But to be serious, is it not Deplorable, that a Gentleman well Born and Educated, should for want of that Money of his which lies in the Chamber of *London*, be exposed to all the Indignities of Fortune; accept of some mean Office, to keep him from starving, List himself a Common Sentinel, to stave off his Importunate Creditors; or, perhaps, take the Highway, and make his Life as Desperate as his Fortune: Whereas, if he enjoyed

enjoyed what was justly his own, might make no Contemptible Figure in the World, where he now lies windbound for want of Money.

Franc. To shew you the Reverse of the Medal. Is it not pity that a Young Gentlewoman, whom Nature and Education have made a finish'd piece for want of those Bags which lie sleeping in the Chamber, betake her self to some mean Employ, or at best to wait upon some Finical Lady, who, excepting her Fortune, is not worthy to be named with her for Accomplishments; or, at last, it may be she's Married to some inferiour Fellow; or, if I durst be familiar with Female Virtue, perhaps, by reason of her Poverty, expos'd to the Sollicitations of unlawful Love, from which Attempts the Possession of her Fortune would secure her.

Aurel. I have wanted neither Lawful nor Unlawful Offers; for the first, I am resolv'd never to disgrace my Father's Ashes by a sorry Marriage, and from the latter Heaven will, I hope, defend me.

Franc. As Despicable as my Fortune may be at present, I am resolv'd not to be Despicable in my own Thoughts: And I will for once, Madam, make you so far my Confessor, as to assure you, I lov'd a Mistress, Fair, Rich, and Virtuous; nor was I (pardon my Vanity) treated with Contempt, and we had certainly Married, had not Fortune on my side forbid the Ban.

Aurel. But is there no Hopes of recovering our Fortunes?

Franc. Much such Hopes as a Dying Patient has, when he sees his Physician shake his Head; but however we do not absolutely Despair.

Aurel. I heard the City were about Selling some of their Lands, in order to raise a Fond for the Payment of their Debts, did that come to any thing?

Franc. Sell their Lands, they'd as soon sell their Charter. No, Madam, all the hopes we have is from the present Parliament.

Aurel. Pray Heaven they prove not so tedious in their Votes, as the last Sessions.

Franc. The greater Concerns of the Nation, as the Wars with France and Ireland, took up so much of their Time, that smaller Matters was put by, all private Interest being to veil to the publick Good; but my prophetick Hopes tell me, that the present Parliament will have the Matter under Consideration, and I doubt not, but those Worthy Members of the City will

will be powerful Solicitors in our almost sinking Cause.

Aurel. Then I think my stay here needless, for the Judges Pictures are able to afford me as much Consolation as I am to expect from any here. I wait with some Impatience the Motions of the Parliament, but must, Sir, after my humble Thanks to you for your extraordinary Company, be so rude as to leave you.

Franc. Pray, Madam, let me wait on you Home.

Aurel. Sir, I am not often attended; but I should be Uncivil to deny my Hand to a Person of such engaging Civility.

Franc. Madam, your Servant. You do me too much Honour.

Jack Baulin

LICENS'D,

November 4th 1690.

FINIS.

London Printed, for Randal Taylor, near Stationers-Hall.
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